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No. 1

"FACT" FORM AND "STORY" FORM READING MATTER

*A Comparison of the Relative Efficiency of Comprehension of Information Presented
in "Fact" Form and in "Story" Form*

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I. Introduction: The selection of materials to be used for purposes of instruction in any given subject is made, at the present time, by two distinctly different methods. One method of selection consists of a haphazard plan in which the material to be used is determined by such irrelevant criteria as personal opinion, educational tradition, pupil's whims, the recommendations of publishers, and the familiarity of the teacher, principal, or supervisor with the material in question. This method may be called "the guessing method."

The second method of selecting materials for instructional purposes in a given subject insists that *the selection must be made by showing the material in question to be of distinct value in promoting the attainment of one or more of the numerous knowledges, skills, habits, and attitudes essential to efficiency in the subject under discussion.* This method further insists that *the value of a piece of material must ultimately be determined by scientific experimentation*, and that, in those cases where experimental evidence remains to be collected, the value of the material is to be determined by sound and successful educational experience. This second method of selecting materials to be used promises the elimination of much which may not be of

distinct value, and the addition of much worthwhile material. It promises the elimination of personal opinion and individual bias in selecting materials. It is a method which is essential to the construction of any course of study which lays claim to being even partially scientific.

II. The Problem: At the present time authors and publishers are presenting numerous books in hygiene, geography, history, and nature study for classroom use. Very frequently these books present highly desirable information, and have as their purpose the imparting of this information to pupils.

There are two distinctly different ways in which this desirable information may be presented. Some books present it in "fact" form, merely presenting the information as such. Other books present it in "story" form; that is, the desirable information is woven into a narrative which provides the story element. This "story" form usually includes characters through whose experiences and conversation the desirable information is given to the reader. These two means of presenting information are also used in silent reading text books whose chief purpose is frequently given as the development of ability to comprehend.

Each of these two methods of presenting

desirable information to be grasped by pupils has its advocates. Those who favor the "story" form argue that the story element excites the interest of pupils and the presence of this interest insures more accurate comprehension than is possible in the "fact" form. Those who favor the "fact" form argue that the presence of the story element directs the attention of pupils to the story, covers the desirable information with irrelevant material, and consequently lowers comprehension.

With the problem in mind which these two methods of presenting information create, the writer carried on an experiment during January, 1925, that had for its purpose *the determination of the relative efficiency of the comprehension of information presented in "story" form and in "fact" form.*

III. *Source of Data:* The pupils who took part in the experiment were those attending the Hibbing Public Schools, Hibbing, Minnesota. Exactly 608 pupils were involved, ranging from the fourth through the eighth grade.

IV. *The Materials:* The reading materials used in this investigation were taken from a certain well known reference book, which is here designated as "H.—M." The first piece of material was the story entitled "T.—T." This chapter provides some very desirable information. Two forms of presenting this material were constructed. The "story" form consisted of the material exactly as it appears in the book. The "fact" form consisted of this same piece of material with the story element entirely eliminated. A careful check was kept on the vocabulary, and, in so far as possible, only those words, phrases, and sentences that appeared among others in the "story" form were used in the construction of the "fact" form.

The second piece of material consisted of the story entitled "H.—D." from the same reference book. The "story" form consisted of the material taken verbatim from the book. The "fact" form was constructed in exactly the same manner as was the "fact" form in connection with "T.—T." All this material was presented to the pupils in mimeographed

form. The "fact" form covered approximately one page in both cases; the "story" form, about two and one-half pages.

The tests constructed for checking the comprehension and retention of the readers of the material were objective in nature. One test was constructed for checking comprehension and retention in reading "T.—T." and one for checking comprehension and retention in reading "H.—D." Each test consisted of fifty questions covering the material read and the attempt was made to make each test so simple that every pupil would secure some score, and so difficult that no pupil would obtain a perfect score. The questions were of the type which can be answered in only one way to be right, and which can be answered accurately in one or a very few words.

V. *Method of Administering the Investigation:* The Thorndike-McCall Reading Scale, Form 1, was given to approximately 700 pupils, grades four to eight inclusive. These pupils were then paired in such a way that two groups of exactly equal ability in comprehension, as measured by the Thorndike-McCall Scale, were obtained. Each group consisted of exactly 304 pupils, and the groups were arbitrarily designated as Group A and Group B.

Group A read the "fact" form of "T.—T." and Group B read the "story" form of the same material. Both groups were given the same comprehension test over this material. The test was entirely a power test, no time limit being imposed upon either group. This comprehension test, herein to be designated as Test I, was given to the pupils in mimeographed form with the reading material. The pupils had before them a copy of the reading material and a copy of the test. They wrote answers on the test sheet as they read the material. Each pupil was given ample time to finish his reading and answer the test questions. No record was kept of the time required by each pupil to finish the task. At the close of the test the reading material and test papers were collected.

Two days later a delayed recall test, herein

ated as Test II, was given to both groups of pupils. While taking this test the pupils did not have the reading material at hand, and the test questions were answered from memory of the material read at the time Test I was given. Test II was an exact duplicate of Test I.

When the work on the material covering "T.—T." was completed, Group A was given the "story" form of "H.—D." and Group B was given the "fact" form of the same material. Test I on this material was administered exactly as in connection with the material on "T.—T." Two days later, Test II, the memory test, was given.

Thus Group A read the "fact" form and Group B the "story" form of the same material, and the same comprehension and delayed recall tests were given to both groups. In like manner Group A read the "story" form and Group B the "fact" form of another piece of material, and both groups were subjected to the same comprehension and delayed recall tests.

VI. Statement of Results: The purpose of this investigation was to determine the relative efficiency of the comprehension of information presented in "fact" form and in "story" form. Efficiency, as used in this experiment, is defined as the ability to comprehend and the ability to retain information.

The first method of comparing the relative

efficiency of the two groups consists of using the two groups as large comparable units. The Table I shows the comparison of the two groups in ability to comprehend and retain information, with the use of proper measures of central tendency and variability.

Table I shows clearly that, in the case of both pieces of material, the group which read the "fact" form did so with more accurate comprehension than did the group which read the "story" form. For example, note the results concerned with Test I on the material on "T.—T." Group A, the "fact" group, secured a mean score of 32.62 and a standard deviation of the distribution of 7.84. The probable error of this mean is .306. Group B, the "story" group, secured a mean score of 29.58 and a standard deviation of the distribution of 8.79. The probable error of the mean is .343. The difference between the two involved means is 3.04, and the probable error of this difference is .45. Because the difference between the two means is more than three times as large as its probable error the difference may be considered significant, in favor of the "fact" group.

The following facts seem clear upon examination of the foregoing table: 1. In both the material on the "T.—T." and that on the "H.—D." the group which read the "fact" form shows a significant superiority in comprehension as measured in this investigation.

Comparison of Relative Efficiency of the "Fact" Group and "Story" Group

TABLE I

| | | [†] Mn. | [‡] S.D. | [§] P.E.Mn. | [¶] D. P.E.D. |
|---------------------------------------|-------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| I. <i>Test I</i> (Comprehension Test) | | | | | |
| a. Material on "T.—T." | | | | | |
| Fact Group (Group A) | 32.62 | 7.84 | .306 | .304 * | |
| Story Group (Group B) | 29.58 | 8.79 | .343 | .45 | |
| b. Material on "H.—D." | | | | | |
| Fact Group (Group B) | 37.46 | 6.14 | .240 | .299 * | |
| Story Group (Group A) | 34.47 | 9.37 | .366 | .43 | |
| II. <i>Test II</i> (Memory Test) | | | | | |
| a. Material on "T.—T." | | | | | |
| Fact Group (Group A) | 21.32 | 7.06 | .382 | .225 * | |
| Story Group (Group B) | 19.07 | 7.66 | .404 | .55 | |
| b. Material on "H.—D." | | | | | |
| Fact Group (Group B) | 23.28 | 8.31 | .438 | 1.30 | |
| Story Group (Group A) | 21.98 | 8.39 | .438 | .61 | |

* Significant difference in favor of the "fact" group

[†]Mn.—mean score[‡]S.D.—standard deviation[§]P.E.Mn.—probable error of mean[¶]D.difference between means[¶]P.E.D.—probable error of difference

2. In the material on the "T.—T." the group which read the "fact" form shows a significant superiority in retaining the information that was read and over which the pupils were tested. 3. In the material on the "H.—D." the group which read the "fact" form shows a superiority in retention, but this superiority is not statistically significant.

The results stated above refer to comparison of the groups as units. It was thought that significant differences in efficiency in comprehension might occur according to reading age as determined by the Thorndike-McCall Scale. This problem requires a second method of comparing the efficiency of the two groups.

Accordingly both groups were sectioned upon the basis of reading age as obtained by the Thorndike-McCall Scale, and the comparison of relative efficiency in comprehension was made on the basis of these sections. Each group was divided into seven sections, and only exact pairs were used in the formation of the sections in order to make corresponding sections presumably of equal reading ability. Section I of each group consisted of those pupils whose reading age fell between 192 months and 203 months. Section II included those pupils whose reading age fell between 169 months and 181 months. The range of reading age in Section III was 152-164 months; Section IV, 135-147 months; Section V, 116-130 months; Section VI, 104-113 months; Section VII, 93-101 months.

Table II shows the results of the comparison of relative efficiency of comprehension by sections for both pieces of material.

The following facts seem to be clear upon examination of the foregoing table: 1. In the comparison of corresponding Sections I and corresponding Sections II there is a significant difference only in one case, shown in connection with the material on "H.—D." where the section which read the "story" form secured a significantly superior mean score. 2. In the comparison of corresponding Sections III, IV, and V, there is a significant

difference in every case in favor of the section that read the "fact" form of the material.

3. In the comparison of corresponding Sections VI the difference between the means is not significant in one case although the "fact" section secured a higher mean score than did the "story" section, and the difference is highly significant in the reading of the material on the "H.—D." in favor of the "fact" form section. 4. In the comparison of corresponding Section VII a significant difference in favor of the "fact" section occurs in connection with the reading of the material on "H.—D." but the difference in connection with the material on "T.—T." is not significant although the "fact" section obtained a higher mean score.

A comparison of corresponding sections has not been made in connection with the delayed recall tests.

VII. Some Limitations of the Results of This Investigation: It should be noted that the results of this investigation provide only preliminary data toward the solution of this problem. The writer wishes to call attention to the need of continued research in connection with the problem. Great care needs to be used in the selection of the materials and methods to be used in the research. More than one standard test should be used for purposes of equating the groups. The materials to be read should preferably be printed rather than mimeographed, and it would be worth while to use different types of story material, varying in terms of the amount and quality of the story element.¹

The stories used in this investigation are probably of that type which detracts as little as possible from the information involved, but there are numerous books which provide the story element in a sense which may be exceedingly distracting. Preferably, the "fact" form and "story" forms should be of equal reading difficulty. The comprehension and retention tests should involve more than one type of objective examination questions. Samples of those types of objective tests which should be used may be found in Ruch's

¹. Miss Viola Nelson, a member of the Hibbing teaching staff, is engaged in an elaborate investigation of this problem. Her preliminary data seem to substantiate the results shown in this report.

TABLE II
Comparison of the Relative Efficiency of Comprehension of the
"Fact" Section and the "Story" Section

| | | ^a Mn. | ^b S.D. | ^c P.E.Mn. | ^d P.E.D. |
|------------------------|-------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Section I (9 cases) | | | | | |
| a. "T.—T." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 39.78 | 1.93 | .431 | .18 | |
| Story Section | 39.60 | 1.69 | .377 | .57 | |
| b. "H.—D." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 41.56 | 4.82 | 1.08 | .44 | |
| Story Section | 42.00 | 4.87 | 1.09 | 1.53 | |
| Section II (28 cases) | | | | | |
| a. "T.—T." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 38.10 | 2.38 | .302 | 1.13 | |
| Story Section | 36.97 | 3.43 | .437 | .53 | |
| b. "H.—D." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 41.75 | 1.90 | .242 | 1.08 ** | |
| Story Section | 42.83 | 1.77 | .225 | .33 | |
| Section III (57 cases) | | | | | |
| a. "T.—T." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 37.53 | 2.82 | .252 | 3.11 * | |
| Story Section | 34.42 | 4.69 | .419 | .48 | |
| b. "H.—D." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 41.44 | 2.51 | .223 | 1.47 * | |
| Story Section | 39.97 | 3.71 | .331 | .38 | |
| Section IV (80 cases) | | | | | |
| a. "T.—T." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 34.08 | 5.03 | .379 | 3.55 * | |
| Story Section | 30.53 | 7.62 | .573 | .69 | |
| b. "H.—D." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 38.51 | 4.35 | .327 | 3.53 * | |
| Story Section | 34.98 | 5.78 | .435 | .54 | |
| Section V (78 cases) | | | | | |
| a. "T.—T." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 31.66 | 6.11 | .466 | 4.58 * | |
| Story Section | 27.08 | 8.09 | .654 | .80 | |
| b. "H.—D." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 36.24 | 5.30 | .404 | 2.51 * | |
| Story Section | 33.73 | 7.65 | .584 | .71 | |
| Section VI (36 cases) | | | | | |
| a. "T.—T." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 23.95 | 7.67 | .863 | 3.17 | |
| Story Section | 20.78 | 7.65 | .856 | 1.21 | |
| b. "H.—D." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 30.08 | 5.53 | .621 | 5.31 * | |
| Story Section | 24.77 | 9.98 | 1.119 | .27 | |
| Section VII (10 cases) | | | | | |
| a. "T.—T." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 12.50 | 5.44 | 1.16 | 3.80 | |
| Story Section | 16.30 | 5.93 | 1.87 | 2.2 | |
| b. "H.—D." Material | | | | | |
| Fact Section | 25.50 | 4.60 | 1.45 | 13.90 * | |
| Story Section | 11.60 | 5.19 | 1.10 | 1.8 | |

** Significant difference in favor of "story" section

* Significant difference in favor of "fact" section

^aMn.—mean score ^bS.D.—standard deviation ^cP.E.Mn.—probable error of mean

^dD.difference between means ^eP.E.D.—probable error of difference

"Improvement of the Written Examination."² The memory tests could be given to advantage at least a month after the reading of the material. A record should be kept of the time required by each pupil to complete the task in connection with both the comprehension and the delayed recall tests.

VIII. Some Educational Implications of the Results of This Investigation: The foregoing results show clearly that, as used in this investigation, the "fact" form of presenting information insures more efficient comprehension and retention of the information involved than does the "story" form of presentation. It seems reasonable, therefore, to say that *for purposes of enhancing comprehension and retention of information by pupils it is better to present that information in "fact" form than to attempt to make it attractive by using the story element as a vehicle.* Because the "story" form of the material was at least twice as long as the "fact" form one may reasonably assume the average time required for reading the "story" form to have been considerably longer than that required for the reading of the "fact" form. If a record had been kept of the time required by each pupil to complete his work one could possibly have shown that the "story" group required more time to get less information than the "fact" group. However, it appears that the use of the "story" form may do no harm to some pupils. This seems to be a possibility especially in the case of those pupils whose ability to comprehend is superior, though in this instance, the comparison of corresponding Sections II, there are not enough cases involved to warrant inferences, and a similar result was not obtained when the groups were shifted.

The value of presenting facts of hygiene, nature study, history, and geography, in "story" form, may be questioned. If the purpose of such procedure is to insure more efficient comprehension and retention of the information involved it seems reasonable to say that there is danger of the manner of presentation defeating this purpose. If the

purpose of the "story" form is any other than the enhancing of comprehension and retention of the information, the burden of proof lies with those who insist upon its use, and they should show that the "story" form is a better means of realizing this purpose than is the "fact" form.

The use of the "story" form in presenting material in silent reading text books which, as the authors claim, is to be used for purposes of developing the numerous knowledges, skills, habits, and attitudes essential in the work type of silent reading, may also be questioned. It remains to be shown that material for such purposes when presented in "story" form insures a more rapid or a more efficient development of these required abilities. Some experience in actual classroom instruction seems to show that the "story" form does not easily lend itself to use in drill exercises which are essential to the development of these numerous abilities. The "fact" form seems to adapt itself better than the "story" form to those drill exercises which constitute a necessary part of the instruction essential to the development of the numerous abilities involved in the location, the comprehension, the evaluation, the selection, and the organization of material read in the light of the problem at hand. Furthermore, the "story" form does not seem to be beneficial in developing proper work attitudes which are essential objectives of instruction in the work type of silent reading. Also, the story may be said to represent literary material, and the use of the "story" form as material for drill exercises in developing the abilities required in the work type of silent reading may handicap the development of proper tastes for and appreciation of good literature.

One should bear in mind, however, that the use of the "story" form may be beneficial in developing other objectives of instruction. There is a probability that it may aid in exciting the interest of pupils in material in which they should be interested.

². Ruch, G.M.: Improvement of the Written Examination—Chapter IV, Pages 65-105 Scott, Foresman and Company—Chicago 1925.

CURIOSITY—AN ASSET IN TEACHING

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THE NUMBER of questions a child can ask and the vast territory which he covers in his questioning is an ancient theme. It is also the subject of many time-worn jokes.

But to the child, these gropings for meanings of half-digested and puzzling experiences are not funny. So serious is he in his quest that even when he knows he is in danger of being considered a nuisance, he often refuses to be diverted from that quest. Such persistence ought not to be discouraged. Rather should it be studied as an asset and diverted to the right use. For as the child absorbs the answers to his questions and fits them into his daily experiences, no doubt he is beginning to reason. Dr. Kilpatrick says "Meanings are the stuff out of which thinking is made." It should be remembered that a child's questions reveal his attempts to clarify meanings.

How to find time to take care of all these questions! That is the difficulty which parents and teachers are continually facing.

The following activity was carried out in Miss Oden's Third Grade at Vine Street School. It shows in a practical way how children's interests may be satisfied as a part of the work of the regular classroom.

The teacher told her class that she had noticed they were asking many good questions, that she did not always have time to answer these, and also that she thought if time and help were given them, the children could answer a goodly portion of their questions themselves. It was suggested that a question box be made, that the children drop their questions in this box and that they be given a special time during the week to consider the questions.

The plan was favored by the children and immediately put into practice, half an hour of each Friday being designated as the time for opening the box. As the questions were

read aloud by the secretary of the "Question and Answer Club," the children discussed and tried to answer them. Sometimes the teacher helped but more often, some child volunteered to take the question and try to find the answer.

There were many interesting outcomes of this activity. Finding the answers for themselves proved so popular that the room soon became filled with reference material brought by the children from their homes and from the Branch Library. The Branch Librarian was a constant help. She invited the class to the library that she might show them how to use the card catalog and where to find the references on the shelves by subject. The parents, too, became much interested in helping the children secure accurate information. In fact, for many parents it was a revelation to see the worth-while interests and thoughts which children of even third and fourth grade age show. The following questions about birds are a sampling of the type handed in by the children:

- What use is a bird's tail in flying?
- What shape bill does an insect hunter have?
- Why does the female wear sober colors?
- What is the fastest flying bird?
- What is the difference in color of birds' eggs laid in the trees, on the ground, or in holes?
- Who is a famous bird artist?
- Has a wood thrush spots or lines on his breast?

Another achievement was noticed in the way the activity ironed out individual differences which had hitherto been visible to the children themselves. For it was found that the best informed boy in the room was the one who had been the poorest reader and speller.

The quality of questions and answers improved from day to day. Gradually the group learned to accept a challenge for proof of answers given. Sources were compared and standards of authors discussed. Best of all the teacher felt that the children were being given an equipment for practical use in life.

COME HITHER - RAINBOW GOLD - THIS SINGING WORLD

ORTON LOWE

Director of English, State Department of Education, Harrisburg, Penn.

WHY not come hither when there is rainbow gold yet left in this singing world of ours? What will it profit childhood to be inoculated against the fairies and the verses of the nursery merely in order to keep the Puritans pure? When is the common law of life going to give once and for all to childhood a mental and emotional bill of rights? Shall Gradrind's school be reenthroned by the Puritans with Bitzer on the honor roll and Sissy Jupes be demoted because at her age she prefers fancy to fact? Where is fancy bred anyhow, and must we all ring fancy's knell because a-hundred-per-centum factual efficiency so decrees? Or shall we refuse with Puck to put a girdle round the world in forty minutes when that record has been broken in a manner no one can unriddle? Is not a cow jumping over the moon just as real as one walking among the meadow grass and eating the meadow flowers? Who, with merely pennies in his pocket would not chortel in glee on a magic carpet and be indifferent to the non-stop air flight? How can it be shown that the night air mail induces more happy dalliance in the child's world than does the sleigh and reindeer? Why keep the Puritans pure when the world is so full of a number of things? Because they alone are virtuous, shall there be no more cakes—and fairies?

First of all let us rejoice that our antholo-

gies of verse for children are beginning to be made by poets instead of by schoolmasters. In the next place let us rejoice that psalms of life have given way to a universal hospitality for singers new and old who have rainbow-gold to offer. Again let us rejoice that publishers are succeeding in issuing attractive volumes of poetry for children that can with perfect self-respect stand on shelves of general dealers in books. If there was the slightest bit of assurance that the stupid and ugly poetry for occasions that constantly visits school rooms through the pages of the journals of method was on the wane, that would be a fourth cause for rejoicing.

In 1861 Coventry Patmore compiled "The Children's Garland from the Best Poets" from good literature and with good taste. Ten years later John Greenleaf Whittier collected a volume of wide range from poetry then available under the title of "Child Life." A discriminating and outstanding volume of high poetic merit, "Children's Treasury of English Song," was published by Francis Turner Palgrave in 1875. After a quarter of a century had gone by, another poet, William Ernest Henley made an anthology for boys under the title of "Lyra Heroica." Then began that preceptorial reign of volumes under titles that in general are announced as *poems every child should know*. After a while the listening child learned of



From "Star-Talk" by Robert Graves from "Rainbow Gold" by Sara Teasdale. Macmillan.

posey rings and golden staircases. Now we have enchanting Walter De la Mare and the lyrical Sara Teasdale and the discriminating Louis Untermeyer with volumes of universal merit. When shall such a three meet again?

FROM the press of Alfred A. Knopf there was brought forth in 1923 a big volume of almost seven hundred octavo pages, well printed, well illustrated in black and white, and durably bound. It was "Come Hither, a collection of rhymes and poems for the young of all ages made by Walter De la Mare and embellished by Alec Buckels." Over two hundred poets are represented by almost five hundred poems. Its range is from old English balladry to contemporary poets. An overnaming of the chapter titles will give as good a notion by mere suggestions as could be given by a discussion of their nature. Here is the phrasing the poet uses: Morning and May; Mother, Home and Sweetheart; Feasts, Fairs; Beggars, Gipsies; Beasts of the Fields; Fowls of the Air; Elphin, Ouph and Fay; Summer; Greenwood; Solitude; War; Dance, Music and Bells; Autumn Leaves; Winter Snow; "Like Stars upon Some Gloomy Grove;" Lily Bright and Shine-A; "Echo then shall again tell her I follow;" Old Tales and Balladry; Evening and Dreams; The Garden.

In the introduction called "The Story of this Book" the poet spins an absorbing tale of his ramblings as a boy in search of East Dene when he found "An enormous, thick, home-made looking volume covered in greenish shagreen or sharkskin" made by one Nahum Tarune and entitled "Theeothaworldie," a book of rhymes and poems. The introduction can be read by the "young of all ages" for it is charmingly written. The almost two hundred pages of notes at the end of the volume are called "About and Round About" and are unlike any other notes to a volume of verse. It is

my guess that boys and girls will be as interested in them as are teachers and other lovers of poetry. The notes are curious and unusual and very interesting. Despite the fact that some favorite American poets are omitted it would be hard to find any anthology better than "Come Hither" to induce a love for verse of real excellence. It is a bargain at six dollars.

A most interesting feature of "Come Hither" is the inclusion of a great number of poems by unknown authors, largely from English balladry. "Bonnie George Campbell" is a good example of these energetic songs.

"Hie upon Hielands,
and laigh upon Tay,
Bonnie George Campbell
rode out on a day.
Saddled and briddled
and booted rade he;
Toom¹ home cam' the saddle,
but never cam' he.
Down cam' his auld mither,
greetin'² fu' sair,
And down cam' his bonny wife,
wringin' her hair:—
"My meadow lies green,
and my corn is unshorn,
My barn is to build
and my babe is unborn."
Saddled and briddled
and booted rade he;
Toom hame cam' the saddle
but never cam' he.



From "This Singing World" by Louis Untermeyer. Harcourt, Brace.

IN 1922 the Macmillan Company issued, in attractive blue and gold, clearly printed in good paper, "Rainbow Gold, Poems Old and New, Selected for Boys and Girls by Sara Teasdale, with Illustrations by Dugald Walker." It offers a contrast to "Come Hither" in the fact that there are but two hundred-fifty pages of selections from fifty poets. But the selections are made with a discrimination unequalled since Palgrave compiled his anthology. They are of exceptional lyric quality ranging from old Christmas Carols to Masefield's "Sea Fever" and

¹ Empty

² Weeping

Vachel Lindsay's "The Ghosts of the Buffaloes."

Miss Teasdale says that she has "made a small collection of poems that would have pleased the child I used to be and the boy who was my playmate." In making a small book that must exclude many favorites she says: "Alas that a volume cannot have the advantages of being both a big book and a little one at the same time!" "A child's enjoyment is what I have striven for in this collection. We who have seen how poetry has come to our rescue with its delight, its healing, and its new courage in times of stress and sorrow, know that it is our inestimable possession."

It is good to find in this anthology a respect for the intelligence of the child that will permit the inclusion of "Kubla Kahn," "The Skeleton in Armor," "The Forsaken Merman," and "The Lady of Shalot." Equally good is the finding of de la Mare's "Off the Ground," Robert Frost's "Good Hours," and Alfred Noyes' "A Song of Sherwood," and William Butler Yeats' "The Song of Wandering Aengus." Best of all is the finding of this too little known poem by James Ferguson:

Auld Daddy Darkness

"Auld Daddy Darkness creeps frae his hole,
Black as a blackmoor, blin' as a mole:
Stir the fire till it lowes, let the bairnie sit,
Auld Daddy Darkness is no wantit yit.

See him in the corners hidin' frae the licht,
See him at the window gloomin' at the nicht;
Turn up the gas licht, close the shutters a'
An Auld Daddy Darkness will flee far awa'.

Awa' to hide the birdie within its cosy nest,
Awa' to lap the wee flooers on their mither's breast,
Awa' to loosen Gaffer Toil frae his daily ca',
For Auld Daddy Darkness is kindly to a'.

He comes when we're weary to wean's frae oor waes,
He comes when the bairnies are getting aff their claes;
To cover them sae cosy, an' bring bonnie dreams,
So Auld Daddy Darkness is better than he seems.

Steek yer een, my we tot, ye'll see Daddy then;
He's in below the bed claes, to cuddle ye he's fain;
Noo nestle to his bosie, sleep and dream yer fill,
Till Wee Davie Daylight comes keekin' owre the hill."

AN ANTHOLOGY of modern poetry for young people was much needed when in 1923 Harcourt Brace and Company issued "This Singing World" by Louis Untermeyer, with illustrations by Florence Wyman Ivins. It is a well printed volume of four hundred-fifty pages having indexes to authors, to titles, and to first lines—as all anthologies should have. The poems are grouped under these headings: Songs of Awakening; Breath of the Earth; Surge of the Sea; Open Roads; Common Things; Places; Children; Other People; Birds and Beasts; Fairies and Phantoms; World and Music; Whims and Phantasies; Tales and Ballads; Laughing Legends; Fables in Foolscap; Rhymes without Reason; Croons and Lullabies; Stars to Hitch to; Christmas Candles; The Heroic Heart.

Many of the old favorites are not to be found under these headings. I am glad to find emphasis laid on present day American poets who have with rare skill written appealing verse for young folks. Through variety and discriminating selection, "This Singing World" is very interesting. The introduction is done in a racy style, briefly hints at what is to be found between the covers, and is addressed to the boy or girl who reads. It is fitting that "This Singing World" be sampled from poems by our three poet compilers.

NOD

"Softly along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the Sun's last beam leans low
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

The hedge is quick and green with briar,
From their sand the conies creep;
And all the birds that fly in heaven
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses,
Yet, when night's shadows fall,
His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon,
Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,
The waters of no-more-pain,
His ram's bell ring 'neath an arch of stars,
'Rest, rest, and rest again.'

Walter De la Mare.

FULL MOON

(Santa Barbara)

"I listened, there was not a sound to hear
In the great rain of moonlight pouring down,
The eucalyptus trees were carved in silver,
And a light mist of silver lulled the town.

I saw far off the gray Pacific bearing
A broad white disk of flame,
And on the garden-walk a snail beside me
Tracing in crystal the slow way he came."

Sara Teasdale

FANTASY

"A bird ran up the onyx steps of night,
Seeking the moon upon her silver throne;
But stars confused him with their insolent light
And left him in the friendless skies, alone.

He watched the winds, disheveled and awry,
Hurling the clouds, like pillows from their beds;
He saw the mountain-peaks that nudged the sky,
Take off the wreaths of sunset from their heads.

He heard the storms, a troupe of headstrong boys,
(Locked up as punishment for howling tears)
Beat on the ebony doors with such a noise,
That all the angels had to hold their ears.

Frightened, he left the halls of thundering sound
For a less dazzling height, a lowlier dream . . .
And, perching on a watery bough, he found
The moon, her white laugh rippling from the stream.

Louis Untermeyer

THE PROBLEM OF TASTE

AN INVESTIGATION of the reading interests of over 7,000 workers attending the Milwaukee Vocational School, revealed an urgent need for reading guidance. Mr. William F. Rasche, who undertook the survey, offers these suggestions to increase interest in good literature:

"The campaigns for strengthening interest in good reading should be continuous. Good physical equipment is necessary, including book shelves stocked with classified books and good fiction, reading table and chairs, and bulletin boards on which should be posted striking charts, posters and announcements in each general subject room. * * * Make the reading optional; * * * emphasize good reading for the joy of reading and avoid critical comments on matters of style, meter, etc., * * * develop a literary atmosphere; * * * avoid outright condemnation of bad

reading; * * * read part of a good story to pupils and stop at an interesting point; * * * tell interesting things about authors and post lists of their books; * * * establish attractive graded reading courses which offer certificates to those who read a given number of listed books and make satisfactory oral reports; * * * prepare and display charts on new and interesting books; * * * post paper covers of new editions; * * * commend every pupil who reads, especially every pupil whose selections show improvement in taste. * * * Weave the library work into the assigned class work; * * * display public library book lists; * * * list on the bulletin board interesting articles and good stories to be found in the magazines."

Quoted from "Adult Education and the Library," Sept. 1925. Published by the American Library Association.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION IN THE SIXTH GRADE

MRS. M. L. BRANDSMARK
Neenah, Wisconsin

SOMEONE has said, "Not failure but low aim is crime." However true this may be in life, it scarcely holds true in our school composition writing. We shall fare better if we make our aim within the reach of our sixth grade pupils. Let us be satisfied when our pupils produce a short paragraph of a few clear, concise sentences free from gross grammatical errors, with ordinary words spelled correctly, on a subject within their experience. And if this paragraph holds the reader's interest from the opening sentence to the final period, we shall be happy indeed.

About what shall he write? The child's mind is full of experiences from his life and at home and at school, on the play-ground and on the street, which he is eager to relate. These form good subjects for his composition. An incident from his vacation, stories of his brothers and sisters, the care of his pets, his joys, and his troubles have points of interest which can be written up as creditable compositions. What child has not played an April fool joke or a Hallowe'en prank? Here is an opportunity for a clean, concise paragraph with a point to it.

In our sixth grade many of the pupils have some gainful employment or have opportunities occasionally to earn spending money. They are proud to tell of their incomes and of how much they are able to do with their money. Last year one of our banks offered prizes for the best compositions on some phase of thrift. These were taken from the children's own experiences and brought out such topics as:

- How I Earn My Spending Money
- How I Manage My Income
- How I Earned My First Dollar
- Why I Save My Money

As a reward for having 100% of our class depositors in our school savings bank, our sixth grade pupils were taken on a conducted

tour through the city bank. They came back bubbling over with what they had seen and heard, and were quite ready to write on the phase of their visit which interested them most.

Do we hear pupils talking among themselves and saying, "I just hate geography, but I do like arithmetic," or other similar remarks? This presents an opportunity for a composition of the argumentative type. Pupils have emphatic opinions and are quite willing to let them be known. Let pupils write on "One Reason Why I Like Reading," or on a similar topic relating to other subjects. Incidentally the teacher may be benefited by their frank statements. Several pupils gave as one of the reasons why they liked reading: it gave them a chance to read aloud when they were permitted to take the spoken parts in a story. The mad race for silent reading had given little opportunity for oral reading, but that teacher will give more of the desired pleasure next year.

Similarly children enjoy writing of their preferences for certain holidays, months, or seasons, and again the subject is chosen.

The child's love of play is another source from which the class may get inspiration for compositions. He plays many and varied games ranging from "tag" to baseball. To write a description of a simple game—and he must not attempt to describe the complex—so clearly that any child or group of children may play the game from his account is no small achievement and is one of which any child may be justly proud.

Does he have tasks or duties at home? Fortunately most children in our school do. "How to Build a Fire," or "How to Make a Cake," "How to Care for a Horse," "How to Wash Dishes" will be productive of good compositions. The class may act as judge to say whether good results may be produced from these explanations.

Having found something about which to write we must help the pupil to make his topic definite. Let the class discuss a list of topics as:

- A Rainy Day
- My Trip to the Falls
- My Vacation

We must help the pupils see that such subjects lead all around Robin Hood's Barn, and at best will produce a mere cataloging of events. The children will be able to write better paragraphs on:

- Why I Like a Rainy Day
- My Best Fun on a Rainy Day
- Cheated at Play

Trying to help the pupil make his title attractive as well as definite, we may suggest his changing "My Disobedience" to "Caught in the Act," "My Experience with a Rooster" to "Mr. Rooster Got Me."

The next step is now his opening sentence. He is likely to begin his paragraph with, "Once there was a dog," or "One day I went downtown." We must ask him if there have not always been dogs, or if he doesn't often go downtown. There is, then, nothing in either of those sentences that would lead us to anticipate an interesting incident to follow. Moreover, opening sentences similar to these mentioned require one or two more sentences to introduce his story. What he should have is a sentence that will plunge the reader into the heart of the story and make him wonder what is coming next. "Our neighbor's dog does funny tricks," and "As I was going downtown I noticed something shining in the grass" are examples of self starters.

A good ending sentence is also very important. Samples of compositions that have good endings and some with weak or trite endings should be put before the class. We should help the pupil cut his story short at the psychological point. Children are prone to tack on a sentence after they have reached the climax.

The child should be encouraged to give his reaction to his experience, and this may often appear in the concluding sentence. Children have opinions, feelings, and desires, and

should be encouraged to express them. In a composition on "When I Ran Away" the girl finished with, "and how disappointed I was to find no one had missed me." In writing of an accident to a school window while he was at the bat, a boy wrote, "As I sat in the principal's office explaining how it happened, my chum went past the door. I felt so ashamed that anyone should see me there, for I had never been in a principal's office before."

In this grade the paragraph which the child writes should be short, a few brief sentences only. Some children can handle the complex sentence well and should be encouraged to do so. But so long as pupils hand in paragraphs with sentences all strung together with and—and—and, or still worse, without even that symbol of union, the teacher's effort had best be spent teaching the child to write simple sentences in his paragraph. To make the child see that his jumble is not sentences, we may read to him his paragraph all in one breath as he has written it in one sentence and he will usually say, "It needs some periods." Then is the time to help him place periods in the mess he has written. Personal conferences with the child about his compositions are more fruitful of results in creating a desire to improve his paragraphs than all the red pencil mark corrections the teacher may enter while burning the mid-night oil.

While the correcting of compositions does not come within the sphere of this paper, I wish to call attention to the self criticism that the pupil should do. "Read it out loud to yourself" is a familiar saying in our school. Is it clear? Does one step follow another? Is it interesting to the reader? The pupil should be encouraged to make changes.

I have found the reward of having his compositions placed on display in the room a strong incentive to good work, both as to thought and general appearance of paper.

If we have a school paper, we find our pupils eager to make their compositions so interesting and so nearly free from errors that they may hope to have them accepted for publication by the editor. To the boys, the school paper is a real incentive.

POPULARIZING COMPOSITION WITH BOYS

DORA B. CRAIG

B. F. Day School, Seattle, Washington

MISS C— is it too late to submit another story on Rip Van Winkle? I turned one in the other day which you said was very good, but I think I have a better idea here and I believe it is developed in better form. I wondered if you would receive it for criticism as late as this."

"Well Bert, your first story was very acceptable, but as a favor to you I'll go over this one and if I find that you have excelled yourself, I'll use your last idea instead of the first for the project."

This conversation is typical of what takes place in our 8A boy's class where expression seems to be a regular demand if an impression is successfully made. The impression in this case was made by the study of Irving's Rip Van Winkle. The boys thoroughly enjoyed getting acquainted with the queer old hen-pecked husband of Dame Winkle. In the discussion of his character, in which the teacher was very much in the back-ground, the boys pointed out Rip's good and his bad qualities; decided what he lacked in his make-up to produce a really fine man; gave him a modern social setting; discovered what present day means he would find to tinker away his time; questioned his ability to be a good friend and denounced him utterly as a father. Some of their responses follow:

1. *Easy disposition.
2. *Patient.
3. *Popular.
4. *Loved the out-of-doors.
5. *Kind to animals.
6. Fond of children.
7. *Good story teller.
8. Loved everybody but his wife.
9. *Accommodating to neighbors.
10. Lazy.
11. Neglectful of home duties.
12. Meek in manner and a pest around the house.

The numbers starred were declared to be admirable qualities, while the things he lacked were found to be ambition, spirit, will power and a sense of responsibility. About five-sixths of the class agreed that they would enjoy him as a friend because he was so amiable and interesting and because he loved the out-of-doors so much.

None, however, wanted him as a father. The reasons given were: He would be looked upon more or less as a joke in the neighborhood. He didn't have enough will-power to mind his own business. He couldn't be depended upon. He neglected his own children. A son might inherit his traits of character and be a failure in life.

Aside from the appreciation of an excellent bit of literature the boys made a critical estimate of character and conduct. This project, however, is only one part of a bigger scheme of character development which is being undertaken with the boys. They are searching for their ideal traits of character in literature, biography, and life contacts. Once a month these boys hold what is called a closed session where they discuss the really fine deeds which they have witnessed in the life about them or read of in the daily paper, their magazines, or books.

Many times a boy's ideas of the ethics of life seem crude to a grown-up, but they represent his code and they always contain a germ of truth, goodness or strength, which is sufficient for the boy at his stage of development. One must always remember that a butterfly grows from an ugly caterpillar.

At the close of the year it is hoped that the boys will have crystallized their ideas of what makes an ideal friend, an ideal family, an ideal home, and community.

When the boys asked if they might dramatize Rip in a modern setting to present to a modern audience, they were told, as they always are upon such demand, to go ahead

and if they succeeded in making him an interesting character in a modern setting, the best papers would be selected from which a composite character could be created and cast in an interesting situation, to be presented to other members of the school. The work was not compulsory, but every boy submitted a paper and some entered several in the race for place.

They were not writing these papers as tasks; they expected no grades upon them but they were in competition with each other and with themselves to develop the very best paper which they could in order to get in on the final project. Under such circumstances with what freedom and abandon they write! How they enjoy letting their imagination fly! Yet, how very particular they are to get just the right word which will convey to an audience their exact meaning.

Can you visualize such a situation—a healthy, red blooded American boy anxious to get well-ordered, clean-cut, compact, rhythmic English. Yet such was the situation for the boy knew, as he wrote the story, just so it would stand or fall upon its own merit. And not one boy wanted to be left out of the cast! There was another reason that he was willing to write. The task was of his own imposing and the teacher out of the goodness of her heart, permitted the privilege of writing the composition. The very result she had intended at the outset of the undertaking! The method? Call it Tom Sawyer tactics, salesmanship or in more dignified moments, vitalizing or motivating the English composition, but whatever the name the method gets results.

The dominant instinct manifested in any group of normal children is that of self-expression. The opening up of avenues through which the child can find this expression of self is a very important part of education. With this development of the child, comes the growth of his imagination, his imitative impulse, his ability to create and construct and his adjustment to his social group.

While the project dealing with Rip Van Winkle was one freighted with much humor,

the pupils are no less interested in a more serious undertaking.

In this same school under much the same method, plays on Electricity—Good Manners, At Home and Abroad—Naturalization of Foreigners—Correlation Between Art, Music and Poetry—Red Cross Work in this and Other Lands—Good Study Habits—The Past, Present and Future of the Healthy Child, and others have been developed.

This type of exercise has a two-fold purpose. First, to interest children along lines of definite constructive reading and to make that reading function in their lives in some form of oral or written expression.

When the class is undertaking such a project they are given two or three periods for open discussion of this chosen subject, and a line of reading is then started which will answer the questions which have arisen during class discussion. If some pupils find themselves interested along a certain phase of the subject more than any other, they form a committee which takes upon itself the responsibility of collecting the material along this line of interest and presenting to the class in oral form, the results of the investigation. There is considerable competition among them to see which group can get the material most vital to its chosen interest and to present it in most interesting form. There is a good deal of liberty allowed in the method of group presentation. When the material is all in, the heads of committees get together to manipulate it into some sort of pageant or playlet form, to present in the assembly to the rest of the school. The pageant in skeleton form arranged by the committee-heads is then taken up for class criticism and discussion and the teacher's final criticism and judgment are brought into play. The teacher often finds, however, that she has very little to do for she has been at the children's service throughout the collecting and assembling period, whenever they needed her, but only when she was called upon. Each committee has a pride in not calling upon her unless it is absolutely unable to solve its own problems.

When told that they can have a play about a certain subject if they will collect the material, boys and girls have no reluctance, in fact they have much enthusiasm in approaching reading which they might otherwise find dull. A teacher can direct the pupils' reading along any line she desires. The students have an objective which is immediate and sufficient to them. The constructive desire comes from within and they do not shrink

from the job. If a teacher would know the full joy of motivated work, she should go in with the children and all make discoveries together. There is nothing which thrills a boy or girl so much as to bring some information to class which the teacher has not yet discovered. And what if she has, she doesn't need to take all the life out of the search for him by telling him so.

QUEEN MAB

Thomas Hood

A LITTLE fairy comes at night,
Her eyes are blue, her hair is brown,
With silver spots upon her wings,
And from the moon she flutters down.

She has a little silver wand,
And when a good child goes to bed
She waves her hand from right to left,
And makes a circle round its head.

And then it dreams of pleasant things,
Of fountains filled with fairy fish,
And trees that bear delicious fruit,
And bow their branches at a wish.

Of arbors filled with dainty scents
From lovely flowers that never fade;
Bright flies that glitter in the sun,
And glow-worms shining in the shade:

And talking birds with gifted tongues,
For singing songs and telling tales,
And pretty dwarfs to show the way
Through fairy hills and fairy dales.

A LIBRARY IN THE THIRD GRADE

JOHANNA BAGINSKI

Cleveland, Ohio

MY CLASS CONSISTED of forty-one children coming from very foreign homes—homes where they received little or no encouragement to read, so that if they were not stimulated to do so in school, they would probably never develop any liking for literature. I found that these children knew very few stories not included in the text books, so the first few weeks of school, I introduced books to them. From some I read a short story, from others I read only part of the story while I simply showed the pictures in a few. These books were then placed on the window sill for the children's use.

As our collection grew, and we possessed neither a table nor shelves, we soon felt the need of a place to keep the books. After discussing various plans, the boys decided to make a book case. They brought egg crates to school and nailed them together. The board in the center of the crate divided each shelf into convenient sections. The book case was then painted pale blue.

Next the problem of where to sit came up. The children decided that it disturbed the rest of the class if one went to the book case for a book and then returned to his seat; it would be better to stay near the book case and read. They discussed making stools and benches but lack of floor space had to be taken into consideration. Then one child suggested making cushions. Boys and girls alike brought material from home and used their free time to sew. A loop of tape was sewed at one end so that the cushion could be hung in the cloakroom at night.

A librarian and two assistants were chosen by the children. They made a catalogue of the books—a book, made and decorated by the children, and containing the titles and authors of all the books in our library. Each magazine had a number pasted on the back

and was to be replaced on the shelf in proper order. Any child finding a loose or torn page, took the book to the librarian for repairs.

Of course, we had to have signs for our library: first a large one over the book case with "Our Library" printed on it, then many small signs were printed, such as "Please Be Very Quiet," "Are Your Hands Clean?" "Choose ONE Book and Read It." Other small signs were made and pasted on the shelves to mark the places of the different kinds of books—"picture books," "Animal Stories," "Indian Stories," "Magazines," etc.

The children were allowed to use the library at any free time, that is, between bells and whenever their seatwork was finished to their satisfaction. For the afternoon reading period, I divided my class into four groups. Each group chose a leader to serve for a short time.

Once each week, one of these groups conducted "our library hour." The children were always looking for good stories and poems to share with all of us. Library hour was of course, the time for this sharing. It came on Friday afternoon. During the week, the group which was to conduct it, discussed the program. Each child usually had one or more selections to offer. They were not limited to the class library but were encouraged to bring in other books.

One afternoon in the week, the group used their regular reading period for a "getting ready" time. Each child in the group read or recited what he had chosen to the group. If the majority of the group decided his selection was not worth-while, it was dropped. As they were all anxious to make their hour interesting, the censorship of the group was very strict. The leader wrote his program with the advice and help of the rest. On Friday, the rest of the class were the audience and critics. After each reading, the leader

asked for questions or comments and it was interesting to see how much more worthwhile the questions and comments became after several weeks.

At first in making their programs, the element of time was a difficulty, as most of the children chose long stories. After a while, they began to work together, that is, two or more would read parts of the same story. Then they learned to read part and tell the rest of the story in condensed form. This type of story-telling usually aroused many requests from the audience for the name of the book so they could read it themselves.

The Group conducting the library hour always decided what my share was to be. At first it was usually to read or tell a story or part of a story in which most of the class were interested, such as Dr. Dolittle and Peter Pan. Later in the year, almost every Friday brought a request for a poem. Rose Fyleman was their favorite poet, although they were also much interested in children poets, such as Hilda Conkling and Helen Adam.

After I had read a new poem, someone would usually ask for the book and copy it. It was then fastened to our newspapers, often with an illustration made by the child.

There was great variety in our library hours. Sometimes the group would dramatize a story. They would plan and work out their own dramatizations and make their own costumes. Sometimes a story was read by several members of a group and then a peep-show, made by that group to illustrate the story, was passed around the class. At other times, we would have a book review period when anyone could tell us about any interesting new book he had read.

Sometime each week, I added a book or magazine to the library. The public library will usually send to any school room a set of books, which they will change at the teacher's request. This makes it possible to have plenty of variety.

I feel that my class has been benefited by its library in the following ways:

Increased power and ease in reading.

Increased vocabulary.

Improvement in oral language.

Growth in understanding.

Much information.

Awakened imagination.

Power to discriminate and judge.

Increased self control.

Aroused interest in books.

Greater social development.

How to care for books.

Interest in authors.

Interest in poetry and in poets.

The habit of reading in their spare time.

A desire to use the public library. (In October, six children were drawing books from the public library. In May this number had increased to thirty.)

A SUGGESTIVE LIST OF MODERN BOOKS

For Primary Children

Rose Fyleman—*The Rainbow Cat*—Doran

Padriac Column—*The Girl Who Sat by the Ashes*—Macmillan

Padriac Column—*The Boy Who Knew What the Birds Said*—Macmillan

Padriac Column—*The Children Who Followed the Piper*—Macmillan

Padriac Column—*The Peep-Show Man*—Macmillan

Browne—*Granny's Wonderful Chair*—Macmillan

Pyle—*Wonder Clock*—Harper

George Calderon & William Caine—*The Brave Little Tailor*—Harcourt, Brace & Co.

Hewlett—*Grandmother's Fairy Tales*—Stokes (From French of Charles Dumas)

Wiggins & Smith—*The Talking Beasts (Fables)*—Doubleday, Page

Henry Beston—*Firelight Fairy Book*—Atlantic

Williston—*Japanese Fairy Tales*—Rand, McNally

Morley—*Donkey John of Toy Valley*—McClure

Coloma—*Perez, the Mouse*—Lane

M. Williams—*The Velveteen Rabbit*—Doran

Lang—*Red Fairy Book*—McKay

Dyer—*Stories from a Mouse Hole*—Little-Brown

Lofting—*The Story of Dr. Dolittle*—Stokes

Lofting—*Dr. Dolittle's Circus*—Stokes

MacDonald—*Billy Baricoat*—Dutton

Bergengren—*David, the Dreamer*—Atlantic

Burnett—*The Secret Garden*—Stokes

Fairstar—*Memoirs of a London Doll*—Macmillan

Zwigmeyer—*What Happened to Inger Johanne*—Lothrop, Lee & Shepard

Hudson—*A Little Boy Lost*—Knopf

Perkins—*The Twin Books*—Houghton, Mifflin

Burgess—*Mother West Wind Stories*—Little-Brown

Blaisdell—*Twilight Town*—Little-Brown

Blaisdell—*Bunny Rabbit's Dairy*—Little-Brown
 Potter—*Pinafore Pocket Story Book*—Dutton
 James—*Green Willow*—Macmillan
 Wheeler—*Russian Wonder Tales*—Black-London
 Deming—*Indian Child Life*—Stokes
 Benson—*David Blaize and the Blue Door*—Doran
 Deming—*American Animal Life*—Stokes
 Deming—*Animal Folk of Wood and Plain*—Stokes
 Kipling—*Just So Stories*—Doubleday, Page
 Burgess—*Bird Book (colored plates)*—Little-Brown
 Grahame—*Wind in the Willows*—Scribners
 Anatole France—*Honey Bee (translated by Mrs. J. Lane)*—John Lane & Co.
 Carl Ewald—*The Twelve Sisters and Other Stories (Insect Life)*—Thornton, Butterworth
 Boyd Smith—*After They Came Out of the Ark—(Illustrated by Author. Pictures very good)*—Putnam
 V. Reed—*The Bird Nest Boarding House (Illustrated by Oliver Herford)*—Dutton
 Gale—*How the Animals Came to the Circus*—Rand, McNally

MAGAZINES

John Martin Magazines—(Monthly)—
 Child Life Magazine—(Monthly)—Rand, McNally

ILLUSTRATED EDITIONS

Wilhelm Hauff—*Fairy Tales*—Dutton (Translated by L. Weedon—Illustrated by Arthur Dixon in color)
 Anatole France—*Girls and Boys*—Illus. by Boutet de Monvel—Duffield
 Grimm—*Animal Stories*—Illus. by John Rae—Duffield
 Anderson—*Fairy Tales*—Illus. by Parrish—Dutton
 Irving—*Rip Van Winkle*—Illus. by Wyeth—David McKay
 MacDonald—*At the Back of the North Wind*—Illustrated by Jessie Wilcox Smith—Lippincott
—*Beauty and the Beast Picture Book*—Illus. by Walter Crane—Dodd, Mead
 Jack Roberts—*The Wonderful Adventures of Ludo, the Little Green Duck*—Duffield
 Mother Goose—Illus. by Kate Greenaway—Warne
 Mother Goose—Illus. by Jessie Wilcox Smith—Dodd Picture Books—Randolph Caldecott—Warne
 Couch—*Twelve Dancing Princesses*—Illus. by Kay Nielson—Doran
 Retold by F. A. Stell: *English Fairy Tales*—Macmillan—Illus. by Rackham
 Katherine Pyle—*Mother's Nursery Tales*—Illus. by the Author—Dutton
 Eugene Field—*Poems of Childhood*—Illus. by Parish—Scribners

MY KITTEN

*Charles S. Whiting,
 Charleston, West Virginia*

My kitten sleeps the livelong day
 And never seems to want to play,
 But it can see as well at night
 As we can see by broad daylight.

And so when evening shadows creep
 And everybody goes to sleep,
 In place of getting in her bed,
 My kitten goes outside instead.

She stays outside all thru the night
 But comes back home with morning's light.
 I often wonder where she goes
 And why, but I guess no one knows.

I asked her once, and stroked her fur
 And then she started in to purr
 As tho she's trying hard to tell,
 But I don't understand her well.

THE FREE READING PERIOD IN THE LIBRARY OF AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*W. T. LONGSHORE, Principal, and
WINIFRED K. PROUT, Librarian,
Greenwood School, Kansas City, Missouri*

TO THE CHILDREN, the free reading period should be the most pleasant of all those that are spent in the library. At that time they are at liberty to read anything they wish—books, magazines, or papers. They may browse around among the books at will, reading a bit here, a paragraph there, choosing whatever appeals to them at the moment. It can indeed, be a time of delight, profit and pleasure.

The reading material in the library must be chosen with an eye watchful of the many types of children with widely varying tastes, habits, attitudes and ideals which it serves. There should be books of standard juvenile literature for general reading, books of legends and folklore, books of history, travel, biography, nature study, handcraft, and the fine arts—as well as those of purely informational type.

Of suitable current children's magazines there should be a generous supply, supplemented by those accumulated volumes that interest them so much. The daily papers are, of course, a necessity.

The free reading period will help to make the children familiar with the best in the world of books. With ready access to a good supply of carefully selected works of literature, they should, in time, be on the most friendly terms with most of the old favorites and many of the new ones.

In order that they may read worth while books willingly and with pleasure and profit, it is necessary that children form good reading habits early. After these habits are formed

it is comparatively easy to direct the reading—one has only to present those books which have the necessary appeal in themselves at the time the child is ready for them. There is no better opportunity for fostering the formation of these habits than the free reading period. The desirable book may be put into the hands of the child skillfully—in such a way that he will be delighted to read it—more easily at this time than at any other. To establish these habits more firmly, books which keep step with the mental development of the child may be so presented that they will make an irresistible appeal to his widening interests and abilities.

The library should furnish contact with those "inspirational" books which are to be had in such abundance—travel, adventure, biography, etc. These will develop the imagination and create finer ideals in any child. What boy or girl could come through the old myths, legends and hero tales, the King Arthur stories, and the many others of like worth, with thoughts, ideas and ideals unchanged?

To the child whose interests are centered on some special subject for a time—handcraft, nature study, or radio, perhaps—this period gives a time in which he may discover for himself what material on his special subject is available for use when borrowing books later.

An opportunity for actual practice of citizenship is offorded by the free reading period. The children, in the informality of their conduct, the freedom of action, and the use of

common property, can exercise to excellent advantage those habits, traits and practices of good citizenship which are so necessary for all if they are to live and work with their fellow beings.

Then too, there is no better opportunity for learning the use of the library than this time when each child is free to seek whatever he wishes in the wealth of material at hand. This desire for some particular book, or kind of book even, is much more effective than any formal library instruction in giving pupils practical experience in using the library. In the library of the Greenwood School in Kansas City, Missouri, where this work has been carried on for several years, we try to make the free reading periods the starting point of much of the work that is done in that department. Our pupils have 30 minutes per day for five days in the week in the library. We have two periods per week for free reading. The free reading time is a part of the regular library program. The regular weekly program is as follows:

Monday—Free reading and literature appreciation.

Tuesday—Social science reading.

Wednesday—Current events and library instruction.

Thursday—Social science reading.

Friday—Free reading and literature appreciation.

The library is open to the children before school each morning, at noon and after school for study or pleasure reading, and for taking out books for home reading. Many selections are made from interest and curiosity that has been developed during the free reading period.

We try to cultivate in the children a love for and an appreciation of the best and most beautiful in literature, and, at the same time, an ability to use the library in such a way that they can and will continue to use it after leaving school—both for pleasure and to continue their education in practical and cultural lines. We endeavor to make them feel so "at home" in the library and so famili-

iar with its resources that they will look upon it as a worth while place in which to spend spare time and will acquire the habit of turning there for information, aid and pleasure.

Much of the home reading gets its start in the free reading period. Of course, only a small part of the child's reading can be done in the library, but it is usually during that period that he gets his first glimpse of many of the books that he reads. He selects some book at random, reads two or three chapters and becomes interested, then, at the first opportunity, rushes to check out the book for outside reading.

Children are always more than eager to recommend to their classmates books which they have read and enjoyed. Thus, vast fields of literature are opened up to the fresh young minds waiting for them.

We make use of part of the literature appreciation time for giving the children a "bowing acquaintance" with many of the book friends that await them. By means of stories, both told and read, books read, wholly or in part, reports by pupils on books read, and by various kinds of library publicity, we "expose" the children to a volume of literary material from which they may later make a choice of that which interests them individually.

We mean to furnish to our boys and girls not only inspiring and stimulating contact with books, but also personal guidance in the reading of the individual pupils. A glance at material selected during any reading period shows a wide range of tastes and interests, according to the age, training and experience of the children. A child reading the morning paper may be seated next to one who is taking an enchanting trip with the Prince and his Magic Cloak, while across the table another may put aside the Jungle Book in order to show his chum where he can find something that will help him to build a kennel for his new Airedale puppy. The interests and needs of these children are studied and catered to with suitable material just as far as it is possible to do so. But, at the same time, we try to steer them clear of possible book ruts

and keep them out in the open where they may constantly find a new world to explore.

Through this free reading period the children gain in the ability to read and to distinguish good books from bad, learn how to use the library and the care of public property with a certain amount of library courtesy, and at the same time become acquainted with vast quantities of the world's treasures in books.

This work is only one part of that done in the Greenwood elementary school library, but we feel that for this alone the library more than justifies its being.

In the free reading period it is of prime importance that full opportunity be given for reading that is relieved from all the constraint of assigned tasks and from the duty

of making written reports on it, the reading that springs from the joy of it, from normal impulses and interests with consequent pleasure and enjoyment, the reading that is in itself an experience that is worth while—something that contributes to the full life.

Some one has said that the full life is made up of four divisions—vocation, citizenship, family relationship and leisure time. Leisure time is the part that has to do with free reading. If there has been training in free reading in the elementary school the right use of leisure time is well assured. With a love for good books well developed in youth, the well being of the individual and of society is more secure.

Note. The Greenwood School is organized on the Platoon plan.

THE ETERNAL BOY

Ladies Home Journal, Oct., 1925

CONTENTS of the pockets of a twelve-year-old boy:

ROME, B.C. 263

Piece of string.
Small stones, formerly bright now dull.
Mummified beetle, legs missing.
More string.
Broken stylus.

LONDON, A.D. 1556

Piece of string.
Small pebbles, romantically supposed to contain gold.
Dried caterpillars.
More string.
Piece of chalk.

ANY PLACE IN AMERICA, A.D. 1925

Piece of string.
Small stones, thought to contain gold.
Deceased lizard.
More string.
Pencil stub, no point.
String.

—FREEMAN TILDEN.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARY*

An Indispensable Department

C. C. CERTAIN

I. THE LIBRARY IS A PRACTICAL NECESSITY IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

I AM right, am I not when I say that the more vitality you give to your schools, the more activity you stir within them and the more you increase the need for a great variety and a great abundance of instructional materials—books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, pictures, stereographs, slides, motion picture films, maps, globes, industrial and art exhibits, and so on. And you will agree with me, I am sure, that the more abundantly these materials are supplied the more important it is that they be organized with discrimination and with a view to convenient and continuous use throughout the school. The more active the interests within your school, the more need there is for library service to handle the materials of instruction. Delays in supplying working materials cause havoc to work in the classroom. When boys and girls have their active interests stirred as enriched school curricula stir them, they must be given the means of active expression.

1. It Co-ordinates School and Community.

Library service provides this means of active expression. It, furthermore, helps to regulate and to stabilize the movements of

active interests in the school. Consider for example, the round of special days, seasons, and occasions which do so much to co-ordinate experience in the school with the experiences of life outside of school. The librarian anticipates the coming of these occasions. She compiles a list of them many months in advance, and begins looking for and buying special books, pamphlets, newspapers and magazine articles, pictures and slides. Not only this, she confers with teachers and pupils in groups and individually several weeks in advance concerning their needs. In consequence of her interviews, her reminders, the school is ready for the special day or week when it arrives. Work in the class room blends with the spirit of the occasion, and does not clash with activities such as Arbor Day or May Day programs.

The librarian does not stop with mere conferences. She assembles her material and exhibits it with timeliness. She prepares attractive displays for bulletin boards. Through her exhibits and displays she creates an atmosphere of interest that shapes up and calls forth expression in the right key, at the right time.

Let me read to you a selected list of days and special occasions to represent to you the scope of this phase of library service.

| A. Special Days | Dates (Approximate) | Teachers Directly Concerned |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Constitution Day | September 16 | Social science, auditorium |
| Columbus Day | October 12 | Social science |
| Fall Arbor Day | | General science, literature |
| Hallowe'en | October 31 | Literature, auditorium |
| Armistice Day | November 11 | Social science, auditorium |
| Thanksgiving | November, last Thursday | English, social science, auditorium |
| Whittier's Birthday | December 17 | English |
| Christmas | December 25 | English, art, auditorium |
| New Year's | January 1st | Auditorium |
| Franklin's Day | January 6 | Social science, general science, composition |
| Washington's Birthday | February 22 | Social science, English |
| Lincoln's Birthday | February 12 | Social science, English |
| Longfellow's Birthday | February 27 | English |

*A paper read before the School Library Section of the Ohio State Educational Conference, April 3, 1925.

| | | Dates (<i>Approximate</i>) | Teachers Directly Concerned |
|----|------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| A. | <i>Special Days</i> | | |
| | Shakespeare's Birthday | April 23 | English, auditorium |
| | Spring Arbor Day | April 27 | English, general science, social science |
| B. | <i>Special Weeks</i> | | |
| | State Fair | Fall | Social science |
| | Fire Prevention | October 2-9 | Social science, auditorium |
| C. | <i>Appeals for Public Welfare.</i> | | |
| | Red Cross Enrollment | | All teachers |
| | Home and School Gardens | | General science |
| D. | <i>School Organizations</i> | | |
| | The school paper | | |
| | School plays | | |
| | Boy Scouts | | |

Through the efforts of the librarian, these days, special weeks, occasions, become events of creative interest, periods of active expression in school life. The librarian accomplishes this as has been indicated. She provides materials systematically and economically with the least duplication—organized to serve the greatest possible number of children with the least possible confusion, and in the most effective way. These special events, as a result of this work of the librarian become a part of the regular school program. The children are enabled to use up-to-the-minute materials, recent newspaper clippings, illustrations and articles from current magazines, and find in consequence the outlook in school much resembling the spirit of these occasions outside of school.

2. It Gives Reality to School Life.

The school library is an integral and necessary part of the school. The library and the school are as inseparable as the school and the class room. In the real sense there can be no school today which has not functioning within it a well equipped, well administered library filled with active *busy* children. I say "in the real sense," advisedly, and mean exactly that.

The school that has no library lacks reality. The children in it hear only echoes of reality—see only life's broken fragments. They do not live in such a school; they only bide the time until they can live. The deplorable part is that they may *never live very completely* unless they recover from the deadening effects of such a school.

Life is action, it is experience; it is more than either of these; it is action shot through

with thought; it is experience glowing with imagination; it is moral and spiritual consciousness. School life—the life of vigorous childhood—is the growth of thought in action; it is the constant remaking of experience on higher levels of consciousness—physical, moral, and spiritual. The school is the place where children should grow to the best social advantage, because in the school conditions should be provided solely for this purpose. The library is one important means of making conditions *right* and *proper* in the school. Through it are supplied the material means of education—the *materials* of instruction. But the library is more than a means of education, it is an *educative situation*.

Because of his activities in the school and elsewhere, the child needs books. In his experiences at home, in school and everywhere, he requires books. If he does not have access to properly selected collections of books as he needs them, his education becomes halting and unnatural.

The school library is not merely books; it is a place where growing children may find and read exactly the books they need—and under the most satisfying conditions. It is the one room or group of rooms in the school building where conditions may be made exactly representative of life outside of school. No other room in the school can be made so attractive and so satisfying to growing children in pursuit of their normal cultural interests and social responsibilities.

3. It meets the Recreational Requirements of Growing Children.

A bit of library history just here, taken from several years of experience which I

have had in the Detroit schools, may help clear up an erroneous idea that has been one of the greatest obstacles in the way of adequate school library development. When elementary school libraries were first established in Detroit many teachers and principals regarded them merely as places for reference books. They objected seriously in some instances to children using the libraries for any form of recreational reading. Their whole conception of the school library was narrowed severely to its reference functions. Of course, this attitude with few exceptions is ancient history there now, but the shift in point of view came only after the fine social effects of recreational reading had been fully demonstrated. It was not until the libraries became places for recreational reading as well as for reference work that they proved themselves really indispensable and were recognized as such by the teachers and children and their parents.

The reference uses of the school library are tremendously important, but in some respects these uses can be met by crudely organized collections of books, however inadequate these may be. The fact that many teachers and school administrators think of the library purely from this standpoint accounts to considerable extent for the rather prevalent idea that a well organized library, though desirable, is not indispensable in the school. The fallacy here is that the reference uses of the school library represent only a small part of its real function.

The uses of the school library for recreational reading, for truant reading, or reading for appreciation and enjoyment, make it absolutely indispensable. No other school department can take over this important function of the library. No school subject can offer as much, even a fractional part as much, as the library in meeting the responsibility that rests upon the schools to train for a "worthy use of leisure." This has been and still is the most neglected task of the schools. And yet no work that is done in the schools connects more directly with moral growth and with true happiness.

William H. Johnson, of the Chicago Normal College, writing in the Chicago Schools Journal for February, 1925, on the subject of "Education for Leisure" points out the economic and social changes that have created the problem of education for leisure. Among these are automatic machinery which shortens the working day, giving more leisure time. Many young workers earn high wages and have much time and money for recreation. In every class of economic life today both adults and children have at their disposal more leisure time than they know how to use sanely. The schools have done their work so badly that leisure time is not only wastefully used but harmfully used by many persons.

Mr. Johnson points out that the cultural activities, music, art, literature, drama, should open the way to a wholesome use of leisure. He comments, however, that these are the most poorly taught of all school subjects in relation to the ends that they should serve.

"Reading," he states, "offers the most pleasurable and profitable of all means for the enjoyment of leisure time."

The conclusion is that children must be taught not only how to read but they must be taught or trained to *want to read*.

Since it is true that the school is the only phase of social life in which the use of books is uniformly required of all normal individuals in the group, does it not seem a dull waste of opportunity not to organize this use of books on the library basis? We would give, thereby, all children in public schools equal opportunity in acquiring the library—the book-using habit; we would train them specifically in it. Children leaving schools in communities with good public library facilities would continue the habit of reading. In other communities, their desire for books would create a demand for public libraries too insistent to be resisted.

II. THE LIBRARY IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

THE MOST of you nod assent to all of this because you have already accepted the school library as an *ideal* requirement

of culture and education. The trouble is that you have associated this ideal with notions of luxury. You have not accepted it outright as a practical necessity. You have accepted it only theoretically. Practically you think that you can make-shift without a school library—else why are there not more well equipped, well managed school libraries in the state of Ohio. Ohio, like many other states in the country, is neglectful of the reading interests of her school children.

1. It Must be Paid For as are Other Necessities in the School.

I am here to talk to you about the school library as a practical necessity, so vital, so indispensable that money to pay for it must be had, just as money is had for school buildings and for teachers. The children cannot be well educated without school libraries, therefore, you must have them.

You can't depend upon public libraries to supply *school* libraries, because in *general* rural and town communities in the United States are far worse off for public libraries than they are for schools. School libraries first, then public and community libraries—that is the order of development. To any one who cares to investigate the point closely, there is evidence to show that the number of public libraries in actual existence, ready to serve upward of a quarter of a million elementary and secondary schools in the United States is relatively insignificant. Public adult libraries can't, beyond certain exceptional cases, serve the schools—they must be served by the schools. Their arrested development must await the generation of tax payers whose common school education is based on intelligent library reading and study within the school building.

In providing our schools with libraries we not only meet demands of growing, thinking children, but we take thereby the most direct and economical course that can be followed in the development of more adequate public and community libraries. Children who use libraries habitually in school will demand community libraries and pay for them as adult citizens.

2. The Value of the School Library Has Been Fully Demonstrated.

I find that the most convincing talk on libraries and the most constructive is that based upon real situations. Let me talk with you briefly about a few of the Detroit school libraries with which I have worked for several years. In order to present to you some of the least expensive libraries, recently established, with small but well balanced book collections, I am confining these comments to the elementary school library. There were about sixty of these in the Detroit Schools, well equipped, and in charge of trained librarians.

What is said about these elementary school libraries, however, applies with equal force to secondary school libraries. The differences between the two lie mainly in the titles of books selected for each, in the maturity of reading tastes and interests, or in the ultimate size of the book collections after many years. In the large high school library the collection of books after eight or ten years should aggregate twelve to fourteen thousand volumes, as compared to four or five thousand volumes in the elementary school library.

Beginnings may be made equally satisfactorily in both types of library on substantially the same initial costs. We may make a modest beginning for either a high school library or an elementary school library with a collection of 220 books costing approximately \$400.00. I mean that for this amount of money we may buy a very well balanced set of reference or other special books for the new *school library*. Of course, books of fiction, poetry, and necessary standard literature, in abundance, will have to be added later, from year to year. Supplies may be bought for \$100.00, and furniture for \$300.00. I am saying simply that practical, well balanced library equipment in schools may be secured on a comparatively small initial investment.

The following comments on Detroit elementary school libraries will give you a vivid conception of the part these libraries play in the educational life of the children. From a

little bulletin published by the Department of School Libraries, I take these notes:

Heidi's Progress

The following, as reported from Columbian School is quite typical of the circulation of favorite books found in the school libraries.

"Mary read 'Heidi.' She recommended it to my cousin. My cousin told me about it. I read it and recommended it to Margaret. Margaret moved to Port Huron before she finished it, so she asked for it as a birthday gift. After Margaret finished it, she loaned it to the little girl next door."

Public Library Cards

"Many libraries have recently had campaigns for Public Library cards. At the Stephens School a survey was made, and out of an enrollment of 937 pupils, 447 had library cards. Increased circulation to Stephens School children is reported by the Public Library, and a new survey will be made at the close of the campaign."

Looking Backwards

These figures of circulation from Columbian School are interesting.

November 1922—Monthly circulation 295 vols.

November 1923—Monthly circulation 605 vols.

November 1924—Monthly circulation 846 vols.

The Radio Fan

A new motive for map study is provided by the radio. A boy at the Morse School who picked up Hastings, Nebraska, on his radio could not rest until he had looked it up in the library.

The Library in Print

In the "Franklin News," the paper of the Franklin School, for November appear three library articles, one entitled "Why I Should Read Biography," one, a notice of Book Week, and the third, a notice of the contest for Public Library cards and Public Library visits.

Children Teach Use of Dictionary

At the Doty School eight "Captains" (one from each table) were given a lesson on the parts of the dictionary and how to use them, by the librarian. Each "Captain" then prepared a lesson for each person at his table, gave the lesson, graded the pupils and re-

ported the results. The work will later be checked by a general test given by the librarian.

Book Notes

Notes on books read were written originally by members of the 5th and 6th grade literature classes at the Doty School. Later they were placed on a library shelf in a box. Extra slips were placed by the box, and children are free to add notes on books they like. The children use these freely—both to consult and to add to the list.

3. The Work of the School Librarian Is Definitely Constructive and Far Reaching.

If I had the time I could give you more of this delightful library lore, for these schools are rich in it. The voice of the children in praise of their libraries is irresistible. This is like saying that the library acclaims itself, once it is established. But it is usually very difficult for the teacher or the school administrator, living in a school without a library to visualize what one is like. As a rule they will admit its importance in more or less vague terms, but when it comes to saying what the library service is, and securing it in terms of salary and other necessary funds, they find this quite a difficult matter. To answer from the shoulder the board of education's question, or the tax payers' question, "What does this school librarian do?" is baffling.

"She hands out books to the children." Well, yes. "She checks up books as they are returned. She buys books." No board of education that I know of would employ a school librarian on such replies as these. In surmounting this hazard in my own efforts to secure school libraries where they were needed, I went directly into several successful elementary school libraries and observed carefully the tasks that kept the librarian busy. These records, however, only half answered the question. For these records had been based on observations when groups of children were assigned in the room. On this basis the school principal was willing to grant the librarian time to serve the chil-

dren but did not see that she needed time, like the banker, to arrange in advance to serve her patrons effectively. Consequently, I had to go back for more extended observations, this time to show what the librarian actually does to keep her materials in order and ready for use.

The following list of activities in two divisions: (1) activities during regular periods for visitors and classes, and (2) activities when scheduled classes or groups are not present, is an answer to the question, "What does the school librarian do to earn her salary?"

TYPICAL ACTIVITIES

I. During Regular Periods for Visitors and Classes:

- Charging and discharging books.
- Replacing materials where they belong on tables and shelves.
- Instructing children in the use of the library catalog or other points required in the course of study.
- Giving lessons in the use of the encyclopedia.
- Giving lessons in the use of the dictionary.
- Giving class instruction in the care of books.
- Directing children in playing instructional games such as "hunting books" "replacing books" or "alphabet games."
- Preparing for visits to Public Library, or branch.
- Conducting visits to Public Library or branch.
- Training the children how to enter and leave the reading-room.
- Training the children to return to the proper places materials that have been borrowed.
- Giving incidental instructions in the use of books and library materials.
- Telling stories to pupils below grade III; or above grade III.
- Reading aloud to pupils below grade III; or above grade III.
- Standing to assist children as they enter the room at the beginning of the period.
- Walking around the room, alert to the needs of the pupils.
- Taking attendance.
- Settling disputes over coveted books, or chairs.

Calling the children's attention to ways in which the library may serve them in different classes.

Maintaining order during reading periods.
Assisting pupils who need help in finding necessary reading materials.

Checking bad habits in the handling of books.

Instructing children how to read, how to skim, how to take notes, how to use the table of contents, book indexes, etc.

Having children read aloud short selections to check their comprehension.

Reading bits aloud to encourage slow readers.

Helping children from supervised classes to find materials.

Helping children in the preparation of note book assignments such as looking up current events.

Directing the choice of books for readers who need guidance and attention.

Making friends with the children in order to attract them to the library.

Distributing reading lists.

II. During Periods When Scheduled Classes or Groups Are Not Present:

- Conferring with teachers concerning topics to be studied in the near future.
- Analyzing the interests and needs of the school children with a view to meeting these through library materials.
- Visiting classes in order to become acquainted with class room interests of the children.
- Training pupil helpers or library pages.
- Visiting Public Library occasionally to study materials there from the point of view of needs of the school with a view to asking for loans.
- Visiting Teachers' College Library for supplementary materials.
- Attending teachers' meetings.
- Attending committee meetings.
- Visiting the Art Museum in search of materials.
- Telephoning for materials from local sources.
- Assisting teachers who come to the library in search of materials.
- Making analytics.
- Posting statistics on reading.
- Making out circulation reports.

(Continued on page 36)

EDITORIALS

THE "STORY" FORM CHALLENGED

THE RESULTS of the investigation made by Mr. Paul McKee of Hibbing, Minnesota, with reference to the relative efficiency of comprehension of information presented in "fact" form and in "story" form, pages 3-8 indicate the need for further inquiry in this direction. Readers of THE REVIEW will find a scientific attitude shown by Mr. McKee both in the statement of his problem and in the interpretation of his data. He calls attention to the need for further investigation of the problem, but sharply brings into question the "story" form as the more desirable method of presenting information in hygiene, nature study, history and geography. He declares that "the burden of proof lies with those who insist upon its use."

Mr. McKee feels justified in the light of his data in going a step further and questioning the claims of the authors of silent reading text books in which the "story" form is used in presenting material for purpose of developing "numerous knowledges, skills, habits and attitudes essential in the work type of silent reading." He points out, furthermore, that there is danger of doing injury to the proper development of an appreciation for good literature through this use of the "story" form. His challenge here is again one that calls for scientific methods of investigation. A challenge that is so definite and so forcefully placed can scarcely be ignored by the authors concerned, or by the teachers using the "story" form in the way Mr. McKee has questioned.

THE REVIEW will gladly publish any articles scientific in bearing that attempt to answer the question that has been raised.

THE NEXT STEP IN GRADING

THE TEACHER who grades papers on the basis of minimum essentials, singling out a few items for emphasis and calling attention to these in her marking, gives the pupil a real incentive to work for improvement. Not only this; she makes it possible for him to work with far greater intelligence. When the child knows exactly how much his grades are affected by spelling, how much by punctuation, or by grammar, or manuscript form, he has the opportunity to diagnose his difficulties, and to plan corrective work. There are tremendous advantages to him, too, in separate markings on general quality in composition.

For the past few years, many progressive teachers of English have recognized the desirability of giving distinct grades for *general quality in composition*, and for *mechanics of writing*. There is need, however, of going a step further and grading specifically for *spelling, punctuation, grammar, and manuscript form*. Why not? Shouldn't a problem as complicated as the proper functioning of habits in writing be reduced to its simplest elements? Any bad habit in spelling, or in punctuation, or grammar is sufficiently complicated, certainly, for reasonably close analysis on the part of both the teacher and the child. How absurd, then, to mark all the errors that the child makes in spelling, punctuation, and grammar and to grade them merely as errors in the *mechanics of writing*.

If the marking of the child's paper is totalled up in an abstract number, the child's notion of his difficulties will become abstract. Concrete grading, on the other hand will lead to definite, concrete thinking on the part of the child, and to intelligent work for improvement.

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

CLARISSA MURDOCH

THE CLUTCH OF THE CORSICAN. By Alfred H. Bill. The Atlantic Monthly Press. 1925. 241 pages.

The Atlantic Monthly's adventure stories for men and boys are becoming very popular with readers who like a stirring tale that is well told. The three Charles Boardman Hawes stories, "The Dark Frigate," "The Great Quest," and "The Mutineers" are splendid. Then there is "The Scarlet Cockerel" by Clifford M. Sublette which won the Hawes Memorial prize. A story with a very different setting is Charles Nordhoff's "Pearl Lagoon," declared by librarians to be the best boy's book of 1924.

To this list of superlatively fine tales the Atlantic has added "The Clutch of the Corsican" by Alfred H. Bill. This is the story of an American lad and his mother who were detained as hostages in an English prison camp in France, during the time of Napoleon's supremacy and downfall. Here are all the essentials for a successful yarn. First, there is mystery—in the search for his father who disappeared under a cloud of suspicion sometime before the story opens. Then there are many thrilling episodes—the duel, with its comic ending, the dangerous flight through France, the fight with the Cossacks, the exciting trip on the newly invented, much feared steam-boat, the final discovery of his father, and the escape of the reunited family on an American vessel. Added to these elements are varied, interesting, vital characters—even the villains are no blacker than they should be. The descriptions of the daily life of that period and the manners and customs of the people make a rich background for the thrilling incidents. The story is told in a dramatic manner, beginning quietly and developing in interest and intensity toward the climax.

CHARLIE AND HIS COAST GUARDS. By Helen Hill and Violet Maxwell. Macmillan Co. New York. 184 pages.

Small boys, familiar with the seashore, will

delight in reading this story of a little boy's summer on the Maine coast. Just the sort to appeal to a six-year-old are Charlie's adventures—boarding an old wreck, visiting the coast guards in the camp, spending the night in an island lighthouse, going for an all day fishing trip with a real fisherman, digging clams, making and sailing boats, being taught to tie sailor's knots, and learning to read some of the signals used by the coast guard. Can any more fascinating way of spending a vacation be imagined? Inland boys, who have never been lucky enough to visit the seashore, will enjoy the book too, for what boy does not love a sea story? There are enough interesting facts here to please the most eager little questioner. The detailed map, the kind that a child of that age is always drawing, adds greatly to the charm and reality of the book.

CRICKET. By Forrestine C. Hooker. New York: Doubleday Page & Co. 1925. 344 pages.

A dear little girl is Cricket, the heroine of this story of early days at the army post, Fort Sill. She is a mischievous little youngster, always getting into trouble. Children of her own age will enjoy reading of her molasses and feather game, her exchange of clothes with two dirty little Indian girls, and the destruction of her hated hoopskirt. Boys as well as girls will like the story, for it tells of Indians, troopers, and scouts, ever beloved by small boys. There are exciting incidents, many of them true stories of the settling of the west. Dressed up in such a vivid tale, history means something to young children. There is a colored frontispiece by Leslie Crump.

THE RABBIT LANTERN. By Dorothy Rowe. New York City: Macmillan Company. 1925. 98 pages.

This delightful little book is a collection of stories about Chinese children. The author, Dorothy Rowe, an American girl, was born in China and spent her childhood there. Professor Lucius Chapin Porter of Peking University vouches for the truth of her charming stories. While she does not ignore the ugliest

ness in Chinese life, shown in the tales "Sandals" and "Beggar Babies," she emphasizes the delights of childhood. Here our American children, lovers of lollipops, may read of a fascinating, wandering candy man with a flute, who blows all sorts of candy animals, tops that will spin, swords, fruits, and rickshas. They may learn of a wonderful lantern shop with lanterns in the shape of horses, rabbits, flowers, and even houses—all mounted on wheels. These lanterns may be lighted at night and pulled by a string. All the stories have a singular appeal. They may be about a pet bird, a little boy's holiday, sandal gatherers, boys raking fire grass, or a house on a boat. In each one the children are real and winning. The book is beautifully illustrated by Ling Jui Tang, a Chinese artist.

AMONG THE FARMYARD PEOPLE. By Clara Dillingham Pierson. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1925. 245 pages.

This is a reprint of a book that was published in 1899, long before bedtime stories about animals became so popular. The stories are better written than many of the current ones. It is interesting to note that in these little tales of the familiar farm yard animals there is always a moral. I have noticed, however, that children don't object to stories with a lesson as much as adults. Today, with the best writers for children, stories with "tacked on morals" are taboo. Yet a small child who read this book confided to me that it was "swell," so—"that's that." In some of the most attractive new readers for beginners the

majority of the stories are about animals. This shows that educators are beginning to recognize the importance of a child's own preference.

MIGHTY MEN FROM BEOWULF TO WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR. By Eleanor Farjeon. New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1925. 112 pages.

In beautiful language Eleanor Farjeon has written of the great legendary heroes of Britain and Eastern Europe. The stories are very short and simply, but dramatically told. At the end of each story there is a brief poem in ballad form which emphasizes the point of the story. Attractive pictures in black and white by Hugh Chesterton illustrate the book. It is an excellent book and should prove valuable as a supplementary reader in the school room and in the home.

THE GOLDEN PORCH. By W. M. Hutchinson. New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1925. 302 pages.

This book, with its attractive illustrations by Dugald Walker, is a new edition of a favorite collection of Greek fairy tales. The stories are myths found in Pindar's Odes. The author calls attention to the fact that these myths have the true fairy atmosphere. Pindar seems to be describing marvels that he saw with his own eyes, wonders that happened quite naturally. As in all fairy stories the villain is punished and hero rewarded. Tantalus, Peleus, Jason, Perseus, Niobe, Meda and Leda are some of the famous legendary characters described. The stories are shorter than those in Hawthorne's "The Wonder Book" and are suitable for younger children, who eagerly respond to the glamour of those far-off, magical times.

AMONG THE PUBLISHERS

ANOTHER BOOK OF VERSE FOR CHILDREN. Edited by E. V. Lucas. Illustrated by Francis Bedford. New York, Macmillan.

BOY SCOUTS YEAR BOOK. Compiled by Franklin K. Mathews. New York, Appleton.

THE CUCKOO CLOCK AND THE TAPESTRY ROOM. By Mrs. Molesworth. Illustrated by Walter Crane. New York, Macmillan.

THE ELSON FOUNDATION UNIT. Course of Study Manual with Charts. By William H. Elson and Laura E. Runkel. New York, Scott, Foresman.

THE FAT OF THE CAT. By Gottfried Keller. Adapted by Louis Untermeyer. Illustrated by Albert Sallak. New York, Harcourt, Brace.

THE GOBLINS OF HAUBEK. By Alberta Bancroft. Illustrated by Harold Sichel. New York, McBride.

HEALTH THROUGH PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF DISEASES. By Thomas D. Wood and Hugh Grant Rowell. Yonkers-on-Hudson, World Book Company.

THE KATHERINE PYLE BOOK OF FAIRY TALES. By Katherine Pyle. Illustrated by the author, New York, E. P. Dutton.

MADE-TO-ORDER STORIES. By Dorothy Canfield. Illustrated by Dorothy P. Lathrop. New York, Harcourt, Brace.

FROM THE PERIODICALS

THE CURRICULUM-REVISION MOVEMENT: WHAT IT'S ABOUT—The movement for curriculum revision, which is nation-wide, took form at the meeting of the Department of Superintendents in Cleveland, 1923.

The 1924 Yearbook Committee of the Department investigated existing elementary school curricula, and the Commission on the Curriculum undertook the evaluation of existing research studies of curricula. In 1925, at the meeting of the Department of Superintendents, school systems were invited to co-operate in testing the findings of the research committee. Thus far, subject matter has been classified in relation to life activities, and teaching methods and mechanical structure examined.—Ellsworth. Warner, *EDUCATIONAL REVIEW*, January, 1926. Page 12.

"HERE AND NOW" STORIES IN RUSSIA—Investigations of children's perceptions and interests at different ages were carried on at the Institute of Out School Work in Moscow. Stories from Lucy Sprague Mitchell's "Here and Now Story Book" were used in the particular phase of the experiment recorded here. The somewhat obvious conclusions are: 1. stories affect children differently at different ages; 2. reactions differ according to sex; 3. the effects of a story depend to a great extent upon what children have experienced; 4. children like sound imitation; 5. they are sensitive to rhythm; 6. simple prose forms, like those of folk-lore, appeal to them; 7. they find pleasure in personifications—talking animals and the like; 8. children seize upon opportunities to take an active part—amplifying the story or repeating sounds or refrains; 9. they enjoy guessing.—Vera Fediaevsky—*The Elementary School Journal*, December, 1925. Page 278.

AN APOLOGY FOR THE PULITZER PRIZE AWARDS—The Pulitzer prizes are not given solely for literary excellence, but each is accompanied by some condition. The fiction prize is awarded "for the American novel . . . which shall best present the wholesome atmosphere of American life, and the highest standard of American manners and manhood." Similar conditions accompany the drama and biography awards, although the restrictions upon poetry and history are not so definite. Three authors have been awarded Pulitzer prizes twice: Edwin Arlington Robinson, in poetry, Booth Tarkington, fiction, and Eugene O'Neill in drama. The poetry and drama awards seem the most sound from a literary viewpoint. The article is valuable as a summary of contemporary American literature as well as an explanation of the Pulitzer Prizes—Herbert S. Gorman. *The Bookman*, December, 1925. Page 427.

OUR MATERIAL AGE—The article is designed as a reply to "Leisure For What?" by George W. Alger, which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* for April, 1925, and was summarized in *THE REVIEW* for May, 1925. The author meets the charge that education neglects training for a worthy use of leisure with the statement that educators give a great deal of attention to this problem. The crudities and drawbacks of a material civilization are met by the vast machinery for education—schools, magazines, and various other agencies. "Today the right to *know* is just as inalienable as the right of possession of property, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The first problem of education is to create the *desire* for knowledge. One definite task for the "older generation" is to recognize the neighborhood of the world, and to make an effort to unite internationally in a search for truth.—Wm. B. Smith. *EDUCATIONAL REVIEW*, January, 1926. Page 20.

ROBERT FROST—A sympathetic and very thoughtful evaluation of the work of Robert Frost is given in the *London Mercury* for December. The author characterizes Robert Frost as the American poet who most follows the English poetic tradition. Frost's simple acceptance of nature, and his perception of common and homely beauty liken him to Wordsworth. "He helps to restore to modern verse something that was lost in Tennyson and Swinburne, when the poet was so emphatically the bard. . . . He is a poet of unsophisticated life." "His successive volumes show how secure he is from the transporting joys and agonies which modern lyrical poetry has cultivated with so much care and so little success . . . his world of man and nature is viewed imaginatively; his subjects may be mean or common, but they are not meanly beheld." Frost catches the tone and the vigor of common speech, but obliterates what is petty and vulgar.—John Freeman. *London Mercury*, December, 1925. Page 176.

A STUDY OF PUPIL FAILURES IN CHICAGO—The median elementary school in Chicago failed to promote one-eleventh of its enrollment, the average school, one-tenth. Questionnaires sent to the schools where the number of failures was highest, brought replies which gave as reasons: poor administrative conditions, poor health and environment of pupils, low mentality and racial and national difficulties of pupils. Schools with a small percentage of failures gave as reasons: careful supervision and administration, good teaching corps, good health and good racial stock of pupils.—Don C. Rogers, *Elementary School Journal*, December, 1925. Page 273.

SHOP TALK

GUIDED READING

THE HUNDREDS of people who have always wanted to become better informed and better read but have never quite found the time and place and impetus to begin, will welcome the new series of reading courses "Reading with a Purpose" being published by the American Library Association, Chicago.

Biology, by Vernon Kellogg, announced a few weeks ago, began the series. *English Literature*, *Ten Pivotal figures of History* and *Some Great American Books* have recently appeared. Other courses are in preparation. They will cover economics, appreciation of music, the physical sciences, psychology and a number of other subjects, we are told.

Each course forms an interesting popular introduction to its subject with notes on a few of the best books covering it. The number of books recommended is small and the reading of them is, therefore, well within the range of the average busy person. Many libraries are already circulating the courses and the books recommended, without charge. The courses may also be purchased from the American Library Association.

CREATIVE LISTENING

TRUE listening to music is an active process and not a passive state according to Daniel Gregory Mason, author of *Ears to Hear: a Guide for Music Lovers* just published by the American Library Association, Chicago. This is the seventh reading course in the series "Reading with a Purpose."

It is written for the individual who knows little about music and it is intended to help the average listener get more enjoyment from the music he hears.

In about thirty-five pages, Professor Mason introduces the subject and recommends seven books from the reading of which he promises a better understanding and appreciation of music. How to develop the active process of creative listening is interestingly brought

out. Professor Mason is distinguished as composer, teacher and author of many popular books on music. His course promises much pleasure and profit to the thousands of radio, victrola, and concert enthusiasts and to music lovers generally.

Other courses that have already appeared in this "Reading with a Purpose" series are *Biology*, *English Literature*, *Some Great American Books*, *Sociology*, *Ten Pivotal Figures of History* and *Conflicts in American Public Opinion*. The courses and the books recommended are available at most public libraries.

ARBOR DAY

THE CELEBRATION of Arbor Day will be given fresh interest in many states this year because of the national playground beautification contest which is being conducted by the Playground and Recreation Association of America. Recreation departments, playground committees, schools, park commissions, American Legion Posts, parent teacher associations, women's clubs, chambers of commerce, and other organizations in 179 cities which have entered the contest and which are beautifying their playgrounds in anticipation of winning national honor and cash prizes of either \$100 or \$550, are being asked by the contest committee to utilize Arbor Day as one of the most appropriate occasions for the beautification of their play fields.

With the current interest in improvement of play spaces, it is expected that many cities not competing in the contest will also select Arbor Day for the planting of trees, shrubs, vines and flowers about the school grounds and on play and athletic fields as a part of the general beautification movement.

On Arbor Day the special interest of the children will be enlisted by summoning them to do the planting or to engage in other beautification under the direction of a nurs-

eryman or landscape architect. A ceremony, including a brief address on the meaning of Arbor Day, reciting of verses, songs, stories on noted trees, and dedication of the

plantings may accompany the planting. Arbor Day is celebrated at different times in different states, but the majority of the states have selected days in April or May.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARY

(Continued from page 30)

Preparing new books for use.

Searching among library books for material relating to work in progress in various classes.

Securing pictures for borrowers.

Organizing material—Books, magazines, pictures, etc.

Checking current events from periodicals to interest pupils or teachers.

Reading over material to judge its suitability for work in a given grade.

Checking up books received from the Public Library.

Calling on local museum periodically for needed exhibit material.

Checking books to be returned by parcel post to the Public Library.

Wrapping up materials for parcel post.

Preparing attractive signs and notices for shelves, or tables, or bulletin boards.

Marking in newspapers and magazines pictures or articles for children to cut out.

Clipping book jackets or other illustrations to post on bulletin boards or to place among the books on shelves.

Mounting pictures.

Preparing pictures for scrap books.

Making scrap books.

Preparing materials for teachers' meetings.

Arranging materials for special club programs.

Re-organizing the posters and exhibits on bulletin boards each week or oftener.

Preparing and setting up exhibits at the request of various school departments.

Arranging tables and chairs.

Placing books on reserve in response to special requests from teachers.

Preparing materials for special days.